

PART VI

LIVESTOCK, DAIRYING AND POULTRY

General Importance

Livestock and livestock products occupy a secondary position in Walla Walla County agriculture behind commercial crop production. According to the Census of Agriculture, there were 154 county farms which specialized in livestock, dairying or poultry in 1959. Over 600 farms in the county, however, had livestock on hand during the year.

Census of Agriculture data indicate that in 1959 about 17.5 percent of all farm products sold, in terms of cash returns to Walla Walla County farmers, was derived from livestock and livestock products. The value of all animals and livestock products marketed was \$4,228,801. Livestock and livestock products, other than poultry and dairy, accounted for 67.1 percent of this sales value. In 1959, Walla Walla ranked sixteenth among the 39 counties of Washington in farm sales of all livestock and livestock products.

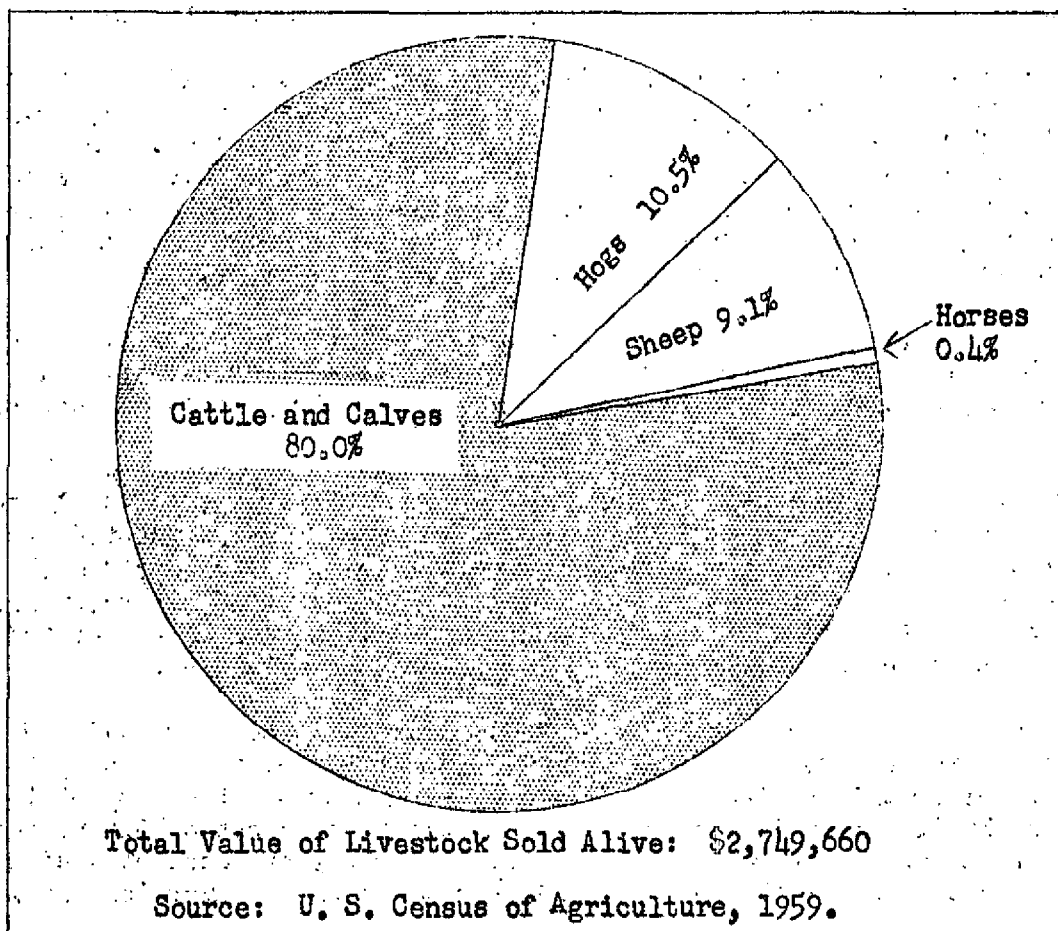


Figure 13. Value of Livestock Sold Alive
Walla Walla County, 1959.

Livestock Trends

Significant changes have occurred in the livestock farming of Walla Walla County since 1940. The value of livestock and animal products sold off farms increased from \$961,211 in 1940 to \$4,228,801 in 1959. There have been net gains in cattle and turkeys from 1940 to 1959. Sheep, hog and chicken numbers declined after 1940 but between 1954 and 1959 the trend was reversed. Horses and mules have steadily dropped in numbers since 1940. Changes also have occurred in the county's production of dairy and poultry products. Although whole milk sales have increased over the year, the amount of cream sold off the farms has been reduced considerably. Egg sales off the farms, however, increased more than 60 percent since the late 1940's.

Cattle: Beef and Dairy

Beef cattle production is the most important livestock farming activity in Walla Walla County. Beef cattle numbers increased in the county during World War II reaching 14,200 head in 1944. After a short downward trend during the immediate post-war years, cattle numbers increased to 20,800 by 1955 and have remained above that figure since. In 1962, there was an estimated 24,400 head of beef cattle which represented 86.5 percent of all cattle in the county at that time.

Farm income from the sale of cattle and calves in Walla Walla County has increased greatly in recent years. In 1954, cattle and calves worth \$1,176,373 were sold off 492 farms compared with \$2,199,604 off 464 farms in 1959. In 1959, 13,682 head of cattle were sold which included 4,304 calves. Five years earlier (in 1954) cattle and calves marketed from farms numbered 12,065 head. Calves sold numbered 6,285. The larger proportion of calves sold in 1954 than in 1959 partially accounts for the lower sales figure in the earlier year.

Most of the beef cattle in the county are found in the Walla Walla River Valley. They also are kept on feed in the Touchet and Dry Creek Valleys. Many are raised on rangelands in the Blue Mountains and on the grasslands bordering the Snake River.

Dairying occupies a relatively minor part of the total agricultural economy of Walla Walla County. In 1959, dairy products sold off farms amounted to \$877,832 and accounted for 3.6 percent of the sales value of all farm products marketed during the year. Dairy products sold in 1959 represented a 45.5 percent increase over 1954 sales which amounted to \$603,417. In 1959, the Census enumerated 42 dairy farms in the county compared with 57 in 1954 and 89 in 1950.

The number of dairy cattle in Walla Walla County has been gradually decreasing over the last two decades. From 1940 to 1959, numbers ranged between 7,000 and 9,000 head. Since this period, dairy cattle have numbered between 6,500 in 1951 and 3,800 in 1962. In 1962, the dairy cattle number represented 13.5 percent of all cattle found in the county. Milk cows in the county are concentrated in the irrigated areas. Most of them are found in the Walla Walla River lowlands.

Since 1920 the sale of whole milk from Walla Walla County dairy farms has greatly increased while the sales of cream and farm butter have markedly decreased. In 1920, farmers sold a little over 2,500,000 pounds of whole milk compared with 17,275,705 pounds in 1959. Butterfat sales amounted to 202,168 pounds in 1920 increasing to a high of 452,364 pounds in 1940. Sales have dropped to 47,548 pounds in 1959.

Table 29. Livestock Numbers on Farms
Walla Walla County, 1939-1962

Year	All Cattle (head)	Beef Cattle (head)	Dairy Cattle (head)
1939	17,300	8,700	8,600
1940	15,700	6,700	9,000
1941	18,500	9,800	8,700
1942	19,100	10,200	8,900
1943	21,100	12,000	9,100
1944	23,100	14,200	8,900
1945	20,000	12,400	7,600
1946	18,000	10,200	7,800
1947	18,000	10,700	7,300
1948	16,800	9,500	7,300
1949	18,400	11,100	7,300
1950	17,000	9,700	7,300
1951	18,000	11,500	6,500
1952	20,000	13,900	6,100
1953	23,300	18,200	5,100
1954	24,500	19,300	5,200
1955	26,100	20,800	5,300
1956	27,500	22,900	4,600
1957	26,000	21,900	4,100
1958	27,000	23,100	3,900
1959	25,000	21,100	3,900
1960	26,900	22,900	4,000
1961	27,400	23,600	3,800
1962	28,200	24,400	3,800

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Table 30. Dairy Products Sold From Farms
Walla Walla County, 1949-1959

Year	Any Milk or Cream Sold (dollars)	Whole Milk Sold (pounds)	Butterfat in Cream Sold (pounds)
1949	\$751,382	11,696,290	173,957
1954	603,417	12,262,773	93,968
1959	877,832	17,275,705	47,548

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Sheep

The third most important livestock enterprise in Walla Walla County involves sheep. Sheep and lamb numbers in the county were above 30,000 head before 1950. During the early 1950's, sheep numbers decreased to 12,420 head in 1954. Numbers,

however, took an upward trend in the latter half of the 1950's, reaching 23,263 head by 1959. In 1959, Walla Walla ranked fifth among the counties of Washington in sheep numbers.

The number of farms in the county with sheep has increased since 1949 from 88 to 108 in 1954 and 137 in 1959. In 1959, 86 farms reported flocks of less than 25 head while 40 farms indicated having flocks between 25 and 299. Only 11 farms reported owning 300 or more sheep. Most sheep are now kept in small flocks in the irrigated valleys.

In 1959, 82 Walla Walla County farms sold 19,307 head of sheep and lambs for a total of \$250,991. Five years earlier in 1954, 7,969 head were marketed for \$109,162 off 75 farms. Also, more wool was shorn in 1959 than in 1954. In 1959, 218,506 pounds of wool were shorn compared with 105,508 pounds in 1954.

Table 31. Sheep, Lambs and Wool Shorn
Walla Walla County, 1939-1959

Year	Sheep and Lambs		Wool Shorn	
	Number of Farms	Head	Number of Farms	Pounds of Wool
1939	135	36,284	103	333,292
1944	103	30,795	71	344,376
1949	88	36,786	54	216,470
1954	108	12,420	85	105,508
1959	137	23,263	112	218,506

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

Hogs

Raising hogs is a sideline enterprise on some Walla Walla County farms. In 1920, the Census enumerated 10,335 hogs, pigs and sows in the county. Hogs gradually decreased in numbers, reaching 4,346 head in 1954. By 1959, however, numbers took an upward turn to total 7,238 head which put Walla Walla seventh among the 39 Washington counties in hogs in that year. The general reduction in the hog number after 1920 was partly a result of the decrease in number of farms feeding hogs for home or custom butchering for family use—a common practice prior to 1939. The number of farms in the county having hogs in 1939 was 652 compared with 177 in 1959.

In 1959, 90 Walla Walla County farms reported selling 8,700 hogs and pigs alive for total receipts of \$287,100. This represented a 138 percent increase in income from the farm sale of 3,695 hogs for \$120,469 by 115 farms in 1954. Most of the hogs are reared in the irrigated and diversified farm areas. These include the Walla Walla River and Touchet River Valleys.

Horses and Mules

The number of horses and mules in Walla Walla County has declined greatly since 1920 as the need for work and draft animals decreased in the wake of farm mechanization. In 1920, the Census counted 13,025 horses in the county while mules added up to 4,898 head. In the 1959 Census, horses and mules totaled only 1,185 and the county ranked tenth in the state in number. They were found on approximately 34 percent of the Walla Walla farms in 1959. Also during the same year, 29 county farms reported selling 43 horses and mules for \$11,965.

Table 32. Hogs, Horses and Mules
Walla Walla County, 1939-1959

Year	Hogs and Pigs		Horses and Mules	
	Number of Farms	Head	Number of Farms	Head
1939	652	8,317	700	4,988
1944	435	7,641	1,027	2,409
1949	363	5,686	534	1,982
1954	234	4,346	397	1,222
1959	177	7,238	336	1,185

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Poultry Farming

Poultry farming in Walla Walla County declined after World War II. More recently total farm receipts from the sale of poultry and poultry products has increased. Sales of poultry and poultry products off the farms reached \$629,907 in 1949, dropped to \$350,755 in 1954 but increased to \$511,722 by 1959. Farms specializing in poultry during the same period numbered 50 in 1950, 30 in 1954 and 36 in 1959. The total number of farms which sold chickens and/or eggs has continued to decline since 1920. Small farm flocks are rapidly becoming extinct. The current trend is toward large commercial flocks on specialized poultry farms. Among Washington counties, Walla Walla ranked fourteenth in the number of chickens sold and was seventeenth in eggs sold in 1959.

The number of chickens four months and older on farms in Walla Walla County in 1959 was 51,330, an increase of about 8 percent from the 1954 figure of 47,391. Poultrymen utilize both light-weight and heavy-weight breeds. White Leghorn are favored for egg production, whereas specialized hybrids are popular as meat production stock.

Table 33. Chickens, Egg Production and Turkeys
Walla Walla County, 1939-1959

Year	Chickens 1/		Egg Production		Turkeys raised (birds)
	Birds	Number of Farms	Number of Farms	Dozens of Eggs	
1939	67,023	1,141	1,047	444,297	14,007
1944	65,526	1,005	936	419,937	51,741
1949	47,755	863	399	311,172 2/	33,245
1954	47,391	529	258	353,418 2/	32,326
1959	51,330	429	169	498,310 2/	45,188

1/ 4 months and over. 2/ Eggs sold.

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Chickens are found on scattered farms throughout the central part of the county. Over half of the chickens, however, are located in the Walla Walla River Valley. There is also a concentration around the town of Burbank.

Eggs sold off Walla Walla County farms in 1959 amounted to 498,310 dozen, an increase of 41 percent above the 1954 sales. Farms reported having sold eggs in 1959 numbered 169 compared with 258 in 1954. The current trend is toward large commercial flocks and specialized poultry farms referred to as "egg factories".

In the past, poultry meat was a by-product of egg production. Now it has become an important farm product in its own right. In 1959, Walla Walla County farm sales of broilers totaled 203,000 compared with 29,700 in 1954. Other chickens sold numbered 30,371 in 1959, an increase of 44.6 percent above the 21,004 marketed in 1954.

In 1959, 13 farms in the county had on hand over 45,000 turkeys and turkey fryers. Five years earlier in 1954, the Census counted 24 farms with a lower total of 32,326 birds. There are farms with less than 50 turkeys as well as some with more than 1,000 birds.